



SERP-P NEWS

Innovating Knowledge Exchange in Policy Research

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Socioeconomic Issue on Spotlight HEALTHCARE SERVICES

Access to healthcare services in the Philippines remains inadequate despite existing programs.

For instance, **Abrigo and Paqueo (2017)** found that while the social health insurance and the conditional cash transfer programs have induced greater hospital visits and lowered out-of-pocket expenditures among poor Filipino families, these were not enough to promote better access to health care. They noted the leakages in these programs and the disparity in the quality of healthcare services across the country.

Moreover, **Abrigo and Ortiz (2019)** found that the continuing maldistribution of healthcare workers can aggravate the country's problem on access to healthcare services. Apparently, Filipino healthcare professionals were more likely to work in areas where earnings are high and near communities where they were trained. They also tended to work in cities and municipalities that have greater access to hospitals and clinics. These issues have resulted in the highly uneven supply of health workers in terms of their geographic distribution in the country.

ANNOUNCEMENTS



The PIDS is inviting submissions for the *Philippine Journal of Development (PJD)*. The PJD is a peer-reviewed multidisciplinary journal published twice a year by the Institute. It considers original, unpublished papers on economics, public administration, political science, international relations, sociology, and other related disciplines. As a policy-oriented journal, it features papers that have strong policy implications on national or international concerns, particularly development issues in the Asia-Pacific region. The target readers of the PJD include researchers, educators, policymakers, and planners.

Please send inquiries and submissions to PJD@mail.pids.gov.ph.

For the guidelines in the preparation of articles, please visit the PJD homepage at <https://www.pids.gov.ph/guidelines-in-the-preparation-of-articles>.

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PARTNER-INSTITUTION ON SPOTLIGHT

University of the Philippines School of Economics (UPSE)

The University of the Philippines School of Economics (UPSE) provides instruction leading to undergraduate and graduate degrees in economics. UPSE aims to be a leading institution in economics education, academic and policy research, and training in Asia.

UPSE was established in 1965. The Department of Economics is responsible for the academic degree programs, while the Economics Research Center oversees the School's research projects. A third functional department, the Public Affairs Office, coordinates the School's various extension,



training, and public service activities. These are the three pillars the UPSE is known for. The School adheres to international standards of excellence and constantly introduces innovations in teaching, research, and public service. It is dedicated to making its teaching of economics compare with the best globally.

Know more about UPSE here: <http://www.econ.upd.edu.ph>

SERP-P FEATURED RESEARCHER

Prof. Orville Jose C. Solon

Prof. Orville Jose C. Solon is a health economics expert and the dean of the UP School of Economics (UPSE). He teaches health economics, public economics, economics of regulation, econometrics, and mathematical economics. Prof. Solon is known for his work on health economics, public health issues, public economics, and the economics of regulation.

Before he was appointed dean of UPSE, he led

the Health Policy Development Program (HPDP) in 2012, a multiyear effort based at the UPSE that supports the formulation of Philippine health

policies. He was also the executive director of the Philippine Center for Economic Development.

Prof. Solon received both his bachelor's degree and his PhD from the UPSE. He conducted postdoctoral studies at Harvard University from 1990 to 1991.

To check the publications of Prof. Solon in SERP-P, simply type "Solon, Orville" in the search box of the SERP-P website.

Meanwhile, **Clarete and Llanto (2017)** highlighted the uneven access to medicines. They found that the implementation of the Generics Act and the Cheaper Medicines Law did not result in higher demand for medicines by the poor. Even at reduced prices, the poor do not have the purchasing power to buy medicines.

Persons with disabilities (PWDs) were not spared as **Reyes et al. (2017)** also noted their lack of access to appropriate services. Out-of-pocket expenditures on health consumed a significant portion of their income.

Moreover, despite health decentralization under the Local Government Code, access to health care has remained low. **Cuenca (2020)** even found that it has negatively impacted access to hospital inpatient services. Behind this problem was the inadequate resources among local government units (LGUs) to deliver basic health services and to maintain and upgrade devolved health facilities.

To address the issue on uneven access to medicines, **Clarete and Llanto (2017)** urged the government to boost competition among drug manufacturers in the domestic market in order to further reduce the cost of medicines. They also called for the provision of incentives to LGUs to invest more in primary health care, with medicines an integral part of their program.

On the maldistribution of healthcare workers, **Abrigo and Ortiz (2019)** advised the government to craft programs that will attract and retain healthcare workers especially in underserved areas. One such program is the boosting of household incomes through local economic development, which is “essential in ensuring the economic viability of any professional practice, particularly in health care”.

Meanwhile, **Reyes et al. (2017)** recommended the increased tapping of medical and nursing students in the communities to improve PWDs’ access to preventive care services. They also called for the expanded coverage for medications and nursing support for PWDs and the continuous training of healthcare providers.

Cuenca (2020) noted that a sound financial resource base is necessary to reap the benefits of health devolution. She underscored that LGUs’ capacity to generate resources is crucial to enable them to carry out their health-related functions.

Lastly, **Abrigo (2019)** urged the government to pursue interventions, such as strategic purchasing and pooled procurement, to lower health costs, as well as improved health information, surveillance, and early detection of diseases.

SERP-P Resources on Healthcare Services

- [Who Are the Health Workers and Where Are They? Revealed Preferences in Location Decision among Health Care Professionals in the Philippines](#)
- [Financing Universal Health Care in an Ageing Philippines](#)
- [Social Protection and Demand for Health Care among Children in the Philippines](#)
- [Devolution of Health Services, Fiscal Decentralization, and Antenatal Care in the Philippines](#)
- [Health Practices of Children and Women with Disabilities](#)
- [Access to Medicines in the Philippines: Overcoming the Barriers](#)
- [Health Accounts Estimates of the Philippines for CY 2012 Based on the 2011 System of Health Accounts](#)
- [Efficiency of Local Governments in Health Service Delivery: A Stochastic Frontier Analysis](#)
- [Fiscal Decentralization and Health Service Delivery: An Assessment](#)
- [Health Devolution in the Philippines: Lessons and Insights](#)
- [Application of Knowledge Management Practices in the Healthcare Delivery System of the Province of Laguna, Philippines](#)
- [Expanding the Delivery of Family Planning and Maternal Health Care Services in the Private Sector: A Look at the Profile of FP Clients of Well-Family Midwife Clinics](#)
- [ECCD-F1KD Situation Analysis in Selected KOICA-UNICEF Municipalities in Northern Samar](#)
- [Quality Assurance in Early Childhood Care and Development in Southeast Asia](#)

CAREER OPPORTUNITIES

Career opportunities at **PIDS**
Career opportunities at **NEDA**
Career opportunities at **INNOTECH**
Career opportunities at **SEARCA**



PIDS organizes weekly webinars to provide the proper venue in the new normal to discuss key development issues with stakeholders based on PIDS research studies. All webinars are streamed live on PIDS Facebook (<https://www.facebook.com/PIDS.PH/>). Be updated on the schedule of upcoming webinars here: <https://www.pids.gov.ph/seminars>

LATEST SERP-P RESOURCES

- Forum on Reducing Disaster Risks Towards a Resilient Agricultural Sector (SEAMEO SEARCA)
- Establishing Climate-Smart Villages in the ASEAN Region to Improve Food Security and Resiliency in Local Communities (SEAMEO SEARCA)
- Proceedings of the Forum on Organic and Inorganic Farming (SEAMEO SEARCA)
- Proceedings of the International Conference on School Gardens: Leveraging the Multifunctionality of School Gardens (SEAMEO SEARCA)
- Policy Roundtable on ATMI-ASEAN: The Case of the Livestock Sector in Vietnam - Proceedings (SEAMEO SEARCA)
- Policy Imperatives to Promote Urban Agriculture in Response to COVID-19 Pandemic Among Local Government Units in the Philippines (SEAMEO SEARCA)
- Agricultural Clusters Approach to Enhance Competitiveness of Smallholder Farms in Southeast Asia (SEAMEO SEARCA)
- Impact of COVID-19 Pandemic on Agriculture Production in Southeast Asia: Reinforcing Transformative Change in Agricultural Food Systems (SEAMEO SEARCA)
- Salinity and drought significantly affect rice production, adopting Good Agricultural Practices is a key solution: Some insights for Mekong River Delta, Vietnam (SEAMEO SEARCA)
- The Use of Nano-chitosan as Biofungicide Against *Phytophthora capsici* on Four Chili Cultivars in West Java, Indonesia for Sustainable Agro-industry Applications (SEAMEO SEARCA)
- Asian Journal of Agriculture and Development Vol. 17 No. 1 (SEAMEO SEARCA)
- Navigating the Headwinds to Sustain Economic Growth 2019 Economic Performance and 2020 Economic Prospects (CPBRD)
- Increasing Competition in the Retail Trade Sector (CPBRD)
- Can Federalism Lead to Better Forest Governance in the Philippines? (CPBRD)
- Taxation of the Philippine Offshore Gaming Industry (CPBRD)
- Taxing Plastic Bags: Looking at Equity and Efficiency Considerations (CPBRD)
- Legislating Fiscal Responsibility (CPBRD)
- Navigating the Headwinds to Sustain Economic Growth 2019 Economic Performance and 2020 Economic Prospects (CPBRD)
- A Risk Assessment on the Covid-19 Situation in the Philippines: Implications on the ECQ Policy (CPBRD)
- Looking into the Implementation of Public Utility Vehicle Modernization Program (CPBRD)

If you want your forthcoming events, latest publications, and other announcements to be included on the *SERP-P News*, contact:

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